

## Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

/058 W

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R 041109Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5715

INFO USCINCPAC HAWAII

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 6542

CINCAPC FOR POLAD

FOLG TELE SENT ACTION DELHI RPTD FOR YOUR INFO. QUOTE.

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRAS 809

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: THE IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE IN TAMIL NADU-  
PRESENCE OF INDIAN ARMY

REF: MADRAS 605

1. IN A FAIRLY FRANK CONVERSATION, TAMIL NADU INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE F.V. ARUL INFORMED ME MAY 4 THAT FIVE BATTALIONS OF INDIAN ARMY INFANTRY WERE BROUGHT INTO THE STATE FROM TRIVANDRUM, BANGALORE AND HYDERABAD WHEN PRESIDENT'S RULE WAS IMPOSED THE NIGHT OF JANUARY 31 - FEBRUARY 1. ARUL DESCRIBED THE FIVE BATTALIONS AS "REGULAR INDIAN ARMY TROOPS OF THE SOUTH INDIA COMMAND," UNDER THE COMMAND OF GEN. PRIVTHI RAJ.

2. ACCORDING TO ARUL, THE BATTALION FROM TRIVANDRUM WAS DEPLOYED TO NAGERCOIL. OF THE TWO BATTALIONS FROM BANGALORE, ONE WAS DEPLOYED TO COIMBATORE AND THE OTHER TO SALEM. OF THE TWO BATTALIONS FROM HYDERABAD, ONE WAS DEPLOYED TO TRICHY AND ONE REMAINED IN  
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MADRAS. THE SOLDIERS "WERE NEVER NEEDED." ARUL SAID, AND WERE NOT

"GENERALLY SEEN" SINCE THEY "REMAINED IN THEIR BARRACKS." THEY WERE HELD IN TAMIL NADU UNTIL AFTER THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT, HE SAID, AND LEFT THE STATE "ABOUT FEBRUARY 18". ARUL INDICATED THAT THE TROOPS COMING IN FROM HYDERABAD WERE FLOWN IN TO MEENAMB-  
AKKAM AIRPORT, CONFIRMING EARLIER REPORTS WE HAD HEARD THAT TROOPS WERE BEING FERRIED IN BY PLANE. HE STATED THAT SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE TROOPS FROM HUDEERABAD CAME IN BY TRUCK, WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN THE BASIS FOR THE STORY THAT THE TROOPS FROM HYDERABAD WERE BROUGHT IN BY TRUCK.

3. IN ADDITION OT THE FIVE BATTALIONS OF INFANTRY, ARUL STATED THAT FIVE BATTALIONS OF CENTRAL POLICE RESERVE (CRP) AND FIVE BATTALIONS OF BORDER SECURITY FORCES (BSF) WERE BROUGHT IN "FROM VARIOUS PLACES." HE DID NOT GIVE A BREAKDOWN ON HOW THE CRP AND BSF UNITS WERE DEPLOYED BUT HE DID SAY THAT THE CRP UNITS FROM TRIVANDRUM "EXCEEDED THEIR MANDATE" BY ARRIVING IN MADRAS ON JANUARY 30 RATHER THAN THE NEXT DAY AS THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED. DELHI WAS ANXIOUS THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENT NOT SUSPECT WHAT WAS GOING ON, ARUL SAID, AND THE EARLY ARRIVAL OF THE CRP FROM TRIVANDRUM ALMOST "GAVE THINGS AWAY." HE UNDERSTANDS THE CRP COMMANDER FROM TRIVANDRUM WAS SEVERELY REPRIMANDED FOR HIS BLUNDER.

4. ONLY THREE BATTALIONS OF CRP REMAIN IN THE STATE, ARUL SAID, AND THESE WILL SOON BE WITHDRAWN SINCE "THEY OBVIOUSLY ARE NOT NEEDED IN TAMIL NADU." HE DID NOT SAY HOW THESE THREE UNITS ARE DEPLOYED, AND HE NEVER REALLY INDICATED WHEN THE OTHER BSF AND CRP UNITS LEFT THE STATE. HOWEVER, HE LEFT ME WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT WITHDRAWALS BEGAN AS SOON AS IT BECAME APPARENT THERE WOULD BE NO TROUBLE IN THE STATE.

5. COMMENT: ARUL REPEATED AT LEAST ONCE THAT THE MILIRARY UNITS WERE NEVER USED, AND HE CONFIRMED OUR EARLIER CONCLUSION THAT THEY WERE BROUGHT IN ONLY IN CASE THE POLICE NEEDED HELP AND WERE IN FACT HELD IN RESERVE. ARUL ALSO CONFIRMED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME CONFUSION IN THE MINDS OF PEOPLE OVER WHETHER OR NOT MILITARY UNITS HAD ACTUALLY BEEN BROUGHT INTO THE STATE. THE TROOPS HAD BEEN SEEN AT THE AIRPORT WHEN THEY WERE ARRIVING, HE SAID, BUT THEY WERE KEPT SO CLOSE TO THEIR BARRACKS THAT IT WAS GENERALLY NOT KNOWN THAT MILITARY UNITS WERE IN TAMIL NADU. THIS LAST CONFIRMS THE  
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OPINION OF MY BRITISH COLLEAGUE THAT THE TROOPS WERE PROBABLY "DE-  
LIBERATELY HIDDEN AWAY TO AVOID ANY AIR OF ARMED CRISIS."  
MCCASKILL  
UNQUOTE SAXBE

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## Message Attributes

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